

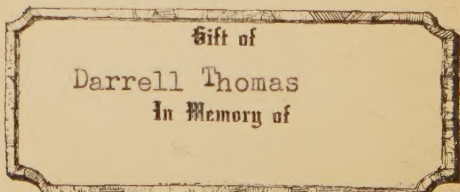
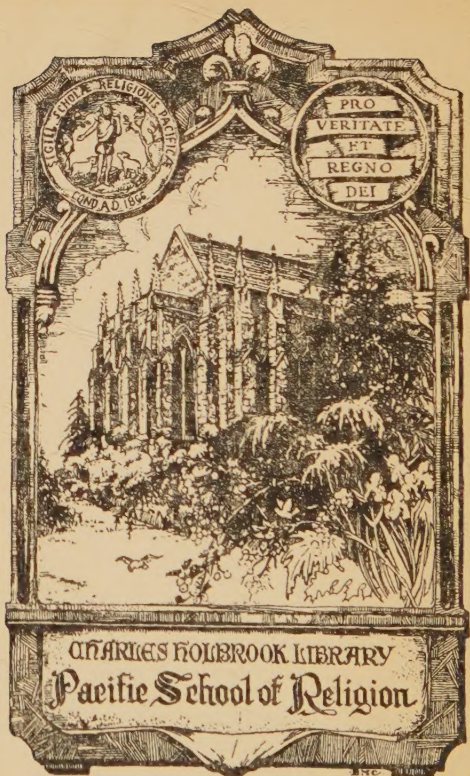
At the
Beautiful Gate
of the
CHURCH

A PRACTICAL DEVOTIONAL

By
WILLARD N. TORIE

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THE METHODIST
BOOK CONCERN



Name

Received into Preparatory Membership

Received in Full Connection





At the
Beautiful Gate
of the
CHURCH

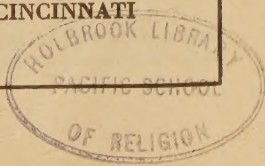
A Membership Handbook

By
WILLARD N. TOBIE



Revised Edition

THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN
NEW YORK CINCINNATI



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FOREWORD TO FIRST EDITION

THIS handbook is the final outcome of ten years' experience with preparatory classes. Upon the training of preparatory members I have always put strong emphasis, with the result that very few whom I have received into preparatory membership have failed to come into full connection. My plan has been to divide the membership into two classes, with the age of fourteen as the basis of separation. Each of these classes meets once a week for at least four months of the preparatory period. I do not receive preparatory members—except in individual cases where the circumstances seem to justify—until they have taken the whole course as outlined in this book. At the last meeting before baptism or final reception the classes are thoroughly drilled on the Ritual, so that their answers are given with unanimity, promptness, and vigor, without the pastor's telling them what to say. They are always required to recite the Baptismal Covenant by heart in concert both at baptism and at the conclusion of the reply ratifying the Baptismal Covenant. This is always very impressive, both to the candidates and to the audience. These baptismal and reception services are always conducted with the utmost solemnity and decorum.

It is an injustice to the Church and to the candidates and a reproach to the pastor to conduct these occasions informally, carelessly, or in an off-hand, extempore way. I shall never forget the careless, hurry-to-get-through way I was received into the Church

Foreword

in full connection. The pastor seemed to think I was only a boy, and it did not matter much how I got in, so that the official questions were asked and answered. I had been looking forward to the day when I should stand up before the great congregation and solemnly take the sacred vows as a great day in my life. Instead of that, this pastor appointed as the time of my reception the prayer-meeting hour, when about twenty people were present, and the place a little side room. I had not had one word of instruction, never having once conversed with my pastor on my duties as a Church member during the six months. When the time came the preacher called me up, hurriedly asked the questions, and told me what to answer, and I was in the Church. But for the impressive inappropriateness of the whole thing, I should have forgotten having ever been taken into the Church. This experience determined me to give preparatory members the most painstaking care, and to make the day of their reception into the Church of Jesus Christ a proud and solemn day in life's calendar.

This book contains the material that has been evolved and successfully used in my own classes. With adaptations, it can be used in classes of all ages. With older classes it should be supplemented with other material, especially in connection with the history of Methodism. The Discipline should be used freely. It is a good plan to assign special subjects for preparation and report by individual members of the older classes. I nearly always require the older preparatory members to read a short History of Methodism. "The Junior History of Methodism," by Koons, is a good book for the general reader of all ages and classes.

Foreword

Trusting that the handbook will accomplish that for which it is sent, I send it on its mission.

WILLARD N. TOBIE.

Springfield, Illinois.

1909

NOTE TO REVISED EDITION

The extensive use of this little book since its publication seven years ago justifies its continuance in this new form. It has been revised in harmony with changes made by the General Conference of 1916.

WILLARD N. TOBIE.

Grand Junction, Colorado.

1916

Chapter I

THE CHURCH

You have joined the Church. Perhaps you are, or will be, a member of other organizations, such as clubs, lodges, and societies. But you can never join any society that is so sacred and important as the Church. You have joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, which is one branch, or division, of the great Church of Jesus Christ, which, in the Apostles' Creed, is called the "holy catholic Church." The Church is the most sacred of all institutions because it alone was directly founded by Christ, the Saviour of the world, and is, therefore, in a peculiar sense, *his* society.

The Bible gives the Church a very beautiful name by calling it the "Body of Christ." As your hands, eyes, tongue, are parts of your body, doing a special work for you in obedience to your spirit, so as a member of the Church you are a part of the "Body of Christ," obeying his commands and doing his work. As your spirit lives in your body, so let Christ always live in you as Master of both your body and spirit.

Another beautiful Bible name for the Church is the "Bride of Christ." What is more lovely than a pure, sweet bride arrayed in white from veil to slipper? Christ is called the "Bridegroom," and is married to his Church. Christ loves the Church even more than a good husband loves his wife. The Church and each member in it should love Christ and be faithful to him as a wife is faithful to her husband. If a Church

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member loves anything more than Christ and his cause, he is as guilty as the wife who breaks her marriage vows. The vows you take when you join the Church are your marriage vows to Christ. To be false to those vows is a great sin. As you study these vows you will see that joining the Church is a very solemn act.

As a Christian and Church member you should learn how to use the Bible. Find the following verses and study them:

BIBLE READING FOR CHAPTER I

Christ founded the Church. Matt. 16. 15-18.

On what is it built? Eph. 2. 19-22; Rev. 21. 14; 1 Cor. 3. 11. (Not on *Peter*, as the Roman Catholics say.)

The Church His body. Eph. 1. 23; Col. 1. 18-24. Read all of 1 Cor. 12., noting verses 12, 20, 27. Gal. 2. 20.

The Bride. Rev. 19. 7, 8; Rev. 21. 2, 9-11; Rev. 22. 17; Eph. 5. 24-33; Isa. 54. 5; James 4. 4.

Vows. Eccl. 5. 4, 5; Psa. 50. 14; Psa. 56. 12.

Chapter II

PREPARATORY MEMBERSHIP

The Methodist Episcopal Church has two kinds of members: *preparatory members* and members in *full connection*. Nearly all the great denominations have a time of study and preparation for Church membership. We Methodists have "probation," or preparatory membership, for two reasons:

1. That the Church may have proof of your sincerity, the depth of your conviction, and the strength of your purpose to lead a new life.

2. That you may study the teachings, rules, history, and organization of the Church and your duties as a Church member.

You are on trial by the Church, and the Church is on trial by you. It is a time when you and the Methodist Church are getting acquainted. Meanwhile you have all the rights of other members of the Church except the right to vote and hold office and the right to a Church trial. A preparatory member who is guilty of bad conduct, or who relapses from his Christian endeavor, is simply dropped from the roll by the pastor and Church officers.

We shall now study carefully and prayerfully the vows you have taken as a preparatory member.

THE EARNEST DESIRE

When you joined the Church as a preparatory member the pastor asked this question:

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Have you an earnest desire to be saved from your sins? Your answer was: **I have.**

What is sin? "Sin is any act, word, or purpose in which we disobey God, or any failure to keep his law of love." Sin is simply choosing your way when it is different from God's way. Christ's way is the only right way, the only safe way. When we choose our will instead of God's will, we sin.

Sin is a fearful thing. It is the most dreadful thing in the world. Turn in your Bible to Romans 6. 23, and see why. It is a "great salvation," then, to be saved from sin. If you were in a burning house and had no way to get out, but just as the roof is about to fall in a fireman runs up his long ladder to the window and takes you out safely, would not that be a great salvation? Now, sin is the fire that is burning in people's souls, and, if not put out, will bring misery and eternal death. To be saved from lying, lust, Sabbath-breaking, evil words, hateful anger, jealousy, selfishness, and all other sins, is indeed a "great salvation." Read Hebrews 2. 3.

Knowing how deadly sin is, it is not strange that you should have an earnest desire to be saved from it. If your desire is earnest enough, you will be saved. That is what Jesus came for. The name JESUS means *Saviour*. Now let us study the Bible to find out how we may be saved from sin.

BIBLE LESSON

The earnest desire. Matt. 5. 6; Psalms 145. 19.

If you have an earnest desire, you will seek. Isaiah 55. 6; Proverbs 8. 17 (the word "early")

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is "diligently" in the Revised Version); Col. 3. 1; Matt. 7. 7-11.

How you must begin to seek. Isa. 55. 7; 1 John 1. 9.

Where you must seek. Matt. 1. 21; Luke 2. 11; John 1. 29; Luke 19. 10; 1 Tim. 1. 15; Acts 4. 12.

ON GUARD AND ON THE MARCH

Will you guard against all things contrary to the teachings of God's Word, and endeavor to lead a holy life, following the commandments of God?

Answer. **I will endeavor so to do.**

This second vow is a soldier's vow. To obey is the first duty of a soldier. You first promise to be *on guard* against everything wrong. Soldiers are sometimes put on guard as sentinels to watch against sudden attacks from the enemy. This vow puts you on guard against the enemy of your soul. If you succeed in living a right life, you must "watch," as Jesus told us. You must watch your tempers, disposition, words, thoughts. Keep your eyes open. Sudden temptations are dangerous. 1 Peter 5. 8: "Be sober (that is, *thoughtful*), be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom withstand, stedfast in your faith." We promise, first, to do nothing which God's Word commands us not to do. But we must not merely *not* do what God forbids: we must *do* what he tells us to do. We must be Doers as well as Don'ters. Be not only "*On Guard*" against evil: be "*On the March*" against evil. The Christian life is a life of "endeavor." Work and fight as well as watch. Be a positive Christian.

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A holy life is a life set aside for God's use—and his only. It must, therefore, be a clean, sinless, useful life. You can strive for nothing better than a holy life. It is better than riches, fame, or pleasure. It is what God wants us to have above all other things.

You have promised to obey the commandments of God. It is only those who obey that will be saved. To disobey God is to sin; and this is what you said you had an earnest desire to be saved from.

BIBLE LESSON

Be on guard. Matt. 26. 41; Luke 21. 34-36; Col. 4. 2; 1 Cor. 16. 13; 1 Peter 5. 8.

Be holy. Lev. 20. 7, 8; Eph. 1. 4; Eph. 5. 25-27; 1 Peter 1. 15, 16.

Obey. 1 Sam. 15. 22; Acts 5. 29; John 14. 21; John 15. 14; 1 John 5. 3; Matt. 7. 21.

THE MEANS OF GRACE

Will you give reverent attendance upon the appointed means of grace in the ministry of the Word, and in the private and public worship of God?

Answer. **With the help of God, I will.**

If we succeed in being saved from sin and in keeping God's commandments, we must use every means to help us. So in this third vow we promise to make use of the means of grace. The most important of the appointed means of grace are: (1) Prayer, (2) Bible study, (3) Church services, (4) The Lord's Supper. If you do not make use of these helps to the Christian life, you will fail. It is as hard to live a Christian life and neglect these helps as it is to become an educated person without books and teachers.

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1. PRAYER

The best praying is done when you are alone. You cannot be a Christian very long if you do not pray in secret. Talk to God as to a friend. Learn to take everything to God in prayer. Turn your thoughts to God on first awaking in the morning, and pray for salvation for the day. Pray often. Pray anywhere. Peter's prayer when he was sinking beneath the waves is the best prayer to use every hour: "Lord, save me."

In every Christian home there should also be regular *family* prayer, and thanksgiving before meals. Family worship has saved many a home from being wrecked.

Learn also to pray in public. It will be hard for you at first, but practice will make it easier. Good public prayer helps not only the one who prays, but those who hear.

Study a few things the Bible teaches about prayer:

Praying alone. Matt. 6. 5-8.

How to pray. Matt. 6. 9-15; Luke 6. 28.

Pray often. Luke 18. 1-8; 1 Thess. 5. 17; Psa. 55. 17.

Let nothing hinder you. Dan. 6.

God hears prayer. Matt. 7. 7-12.

2. BIBLE STUDY

When we pray, we talk to God. When we read the Bible, God talks to us. Our second vow is to do nothing contrary to the teachings of God's Word, to live a holy life, and to follow the commandments of God. But how shall we do this unless we know what God has commanded, and what a holy life is? A great many Church members fail because they do not try to find out what God's Word tells them to do and not to do; and

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so they stumble along in ignorance and commit sin. The devil makes easy victims of those who do not know the Bible. The Bible calls the Word of God the "Sword of the Spirit." Without a sword you will lose the battle. It will be a good plan to begin at once to read the New Testament through. Study a little every day. Study carefully the Bible lessons in these Preparatory Studies.

Jesus overcame the tempter with Bible verses. Matt. 4. 1-11.

What the Bible is good for. 2 Tim. 3. 14-17.

Every verse in Psalm 119 says something about God's Word. Read it.

3. THE CHURCH SERVICES

In this vow we promise to attend the Church services: "the public worship of God." Be a church-going Christian. Go regularly. The preaching service is the most important of all the meetings of the Church. Next to prayer perhaps the most helpful means of grace is the Church service where your pastor explains God's Word, shows you how to use it in your daily life, and inspires you to holy living. The house of God, where we meet with other people who have come to worship, is where we think some of our best thoughts. The Bible tells us to think of whatsoever things are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. (Phil. 4. 8.) What better time and place for this than in God's house at the hours of morning and evening worship? Jesus went to church every Sabbath. His followers should do the same, whenever they can. By regularly going to church you help the pastor and help to make the church an agreeable place to come to. Nobody likes to go to a poorly attended

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church. *Count one* in making an audience. A crowd draws a crowd. Why expect the unconverted to attend church when the members do not attend? *Count one.*

The Sunday school is the best place for you to get help in your Bible*study. It is not a school for children only, but for the whole Church. It is the place to prepare yourself to become a teacher of God's Word.

The prayer meeting is one of the most helpful meetings of the Church. It is a good place to learn to pray and to speak for Christ. The prayer meeting Christians are usually the strongest spiritual force in the Church.

The Epworth League gives the young Christian a fine chance to work for Christ. **Join it, and learn to work.**

We shall speak of the Lord's Supper further on.

Jesus went to church. Luke 4. 16.

We should go. Hebrews 10. 25.

Go gladly. Psalm 122. 1.

Chapter III

THE SACRAMENTS

Christ gave his Church two sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Roman Catholic Church has five others; but the Bible speaks of only two. Protestants take the Bible as their guide in all such matters.

1. BAPTISM

Baptism is the solemn act by which we confess Christ before the world, and is an outward sign that he has pardoned our sins and cleanses us by his Holy Spirit. Water is the symbol that is used.

Three modes of baptism are practiced among Christians: sprinkling, pouring, and immersion. Some Churches practice sprinkling only, and some immersion. Pouring water on the head is not a common form among Protestants. The Methodist Church does not insist upon any one form, but allows each person to choose for himself. The form we prefer, however, is sprinkling. We do not think it can be proved from the Bible how the early Christians were baptized, and so do not think the Church should insist on any one form, when good and learned men differ on the subject. Since the water is only a symbol of cleansing, and does not really wash away sin, the amount used is not important.

A very solemn promise to God is given when you take the Baptismal Covenant. Even though you have been baptized in infancy, you are required to ratify this covenant for yourself when you come into

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the Church in full connection. Learn this covenant by heart and repeat it when you are baptized or when you come into the Church in full connection.

THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT

I renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that I will not follow, nor be led by them.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he arose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. *Amen.*

Having been baptized in this faith, I will obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life. *Amen.*

This Baptismal Covenant contains "The Apostles' Creed." This is the oldest of all Christian creeds and has been used in the Baptism of Christians since about the year 150 A. D., although not exactly in this form. In this creed you notice the words, "the holy catholic Church." This does not mean the Roman Catholic Church, for this creed existed before there was a Roman Catholic

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Church, as we know that Church. The word "catholic" means *universal*. The "holy catholic Church" includes all true Christians in all the Churches, and was designed to include all mankind. When we say this creed, we should not have in mind any one denomination or sect. The "holy catholic Church" is the "communion of saints" in all truly Christian denominations, and doubtless includes some who are not members of any organization. It is the "Body of Christ," and the Body of Christ is where the Spirit of Christ is. Hence more important than the baptism of water is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist said: "I baptized you in water; but he [Christ] shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit" (Mark 1. 8). Christian baptism, therefore, is more than sprinkling or dipping in water: it is the coming of Christ's Spirit upon our spirits. (Acts 19. 1-7.)

It is proper for you to be baptized before you take the Lord's Supper.

2. THE LORD'S SUPPER

The other sacrament is the Lord's Supper, sometimes called the Eucharist, and sometimes the Communion. In this sacrament Christians eat bread and drink the juice of the grape.

First, in remembrance of Christ's death for us;

Second, to remind us that he gives us eternal life;

Third, as a symbol of the "communion of the saints;" that is, that all real Christians are one in Christ, since they all get their spiritual life from him.

The broken bread is a symbol of his broken

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body, and the red juice of the grape is a symbol of his blood shed on the cross for us. So it is a reminder of his death. But it is also a reminder that he is our life; for as food and drink give our bodies life, so Christ, taken into our souls, gives us eternal life. The drinking of the wine in this sacrament has a very precious meaning. It has always been customary in Oriental countries, and among primitive peoples generally, to enter into the "Blood Covenant" with each other. Two persons who become very dear friends often make this covenant, which binds them in an everlasting blood-friendship, or brotherhood. It is performed in various ways, but it consists always in transferring the blood of each into the body of the other. A common way is to open a vein in the arm of each and let the blood fall into a cup of wine. Then each drinks the other's blood in the cup. This is the strongest bond on earth—stronger than blood relationship, or even marriage. Each party to this sacred covenant must defend the other even to laying down life itself. By the adoption of this symbol God himself has entered into covenant relations with men. The "Old Covenant" (Old Testament, we usually call it) was made by the Lord with the Hebrew people through Abraham. When that covenant of blood was made, the animals used in the sacrifice represented God giving his life to Abraham. When Abraham was circumcised he poured out his blood for God. The New Covenant was made with all believers when God in the person of Jesus shed his blood on the cross. In that act God gave us his love and his life. When we accept him by faith we give him our hearts in return. Now, when you remember that the blood represents the *life*, you see that in

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making the Blood Covenant by drinking each other's blood, the life of each was transferred to the other and each was supposed to share the nature of the other. So when we drink the wine of the Communion, it symbolizes the spiritual fact that Christ has given his life to us, he has become our divine brother of the covenant, and we are "partakers of the divine nature." "This is my blood of the covenant." (Matt. 26. 28.)

The Lord's Supper is the supreme act of worship among Christians.

Roman Catholics teach that the priest has the power to change common bread and wine into the very body and blood of Christ, so that the taking of the Lord's Supper is eating the real body and drinking the real blood of Christ under the guise of bread and wine. Protestants generally believe that when Christ said, "This is my body," he meant only, "This is the symbol of my body." Any other view seems to us foolish, superstitious, and idolatrous.

BIBLE READING

The first Lord's Supper. Mark 14. 12-26.

The meaning of the Supper. Luke 22. 19, 20; 1 Cor. 10. 16, 17; 1 Cor. 23. 26; John 6. 51-63.

In what spirit to be partaken of. 1 Cor. 5. 8, and 11. 27-29.

What it means for a Christian to go back to sin. Heb. 10. 26-31.

To trample "under foot the Son of God," and to count "the blood of the covenant . . . an unholy thing," is to be unfaithful to the Blood Covenant, the most sacred bond that unites two lives. It is sacrilege, then, to partake of this sacred Communion while living in willful sin.

Chapter IV

THE FINAL VOWS

You take three sets of vows when you come into the Methodist Episcopal Church: (1) the vows of Preparatory Membership; (2) the Baptismal Covenant; (3) the vows for Full Membership. We shall now study the promises you make in coming into full membership.

Do you here, in the presence of God and of this Congregation, renew the solemn promise contained in the Baptismal Covenant, ratifying and confirming the same, and acknowledging yourselves bound faithfully to observe and keep that Covenant?

Answer. I do.

Some of our Methodist people are baptized in infancy. When this is done, the parents take vows to teach the child certain things that a Christian ought to know. When the child becomes old enough to join the Church in full membership, he must, of course, take the baptismal vow himself and give his consent to his former baptism. So he is asked, first of all, if he will ratify and confirm the solemn promise of the Baptismal Covenant. In this way he makes his childhood baptism his very own, and is bound by the same promise as those who are baptized when they are older.

Do you receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and do you confess him as your Lord and Master?

Answer. I do.

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You will never be asked a more solemn question than this. Receiving Christ as your Saviour and confessing him as the Lord of your life is what makes you a Christian. Water baptism, intellectual assent to any creed, giving of money, or keeping of rules does not make one a Christian. The only value of baptism is that it is a confession before men that Christ is received as Saviour, Lord, and Master. All other acts of a Christian's religious and moral life must be determined by the central fact that Jesus is received as Saviour and Lord. Jesus is the central object of a Christian's faith and the controlling motive of all his thoughts, dispositions, and deeds.

All who receive Jesus and confess him as Lord are "converted," "born from above," "regenerated," and become real spiritual children of God.

This solemn vow obligates you to be loyal to the moral and spiritual teachings of the New Testament. Merely confessing Jesus as Lord will not save one's soul. Jesus once said, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6. 46.) He also said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7. 21).

Make up your mind beforehand that occasions will come when it will require courage and sacrifice to live up to this great confession. Martyrs have lost their lives, multitudes have sacrificed property, popularity, or position, because Jesus was supreme Lord of their consciences and their lives; but nobody ever lost his soul by being loyal to Jesus. It takes grit and nerve to keep this vow. Take it not lightly, therefore, but reverently and in the fear of God.

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Do you believe in the Doctrines of the Holy Scriptures as set forth in the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church?

Answer. I do.

It is the duty of your pastor to explain these Articles to you. If you do not believe what the Methodist Church teaches as essentials of doctrine, it will be best, perhaps, for you to find a Church that you can agree with. But be sure to examine our doctrines thoroughly before you turn your steps to another Church. Nearly every change that has been made in the written creeds or popular beliefs of other denominations in recent years has brought them nearer to the teaching of Methodism. These Articles of Religion, however, contain very little that is not accepted by all evangelical Protestant Churches. They contain the common Protestant faith that distinguishes us from Roman Catholics on one hand, and from Unitarians on the other. The peculiarly Methodist doctrines are not found in these Articles at all. (For these see pp. 32, 33.) See Articles of Religion on pages 50 to 58.

Will you study earnestly and prayerfully to know your duty concerning the principles of Christian stewardship, and will you contribute of your earthly substance, as God has prospered you, to the support of the Gospel and the various benevolent enterprises of the Church?

Answer. I will.

That means plainly that you will be a Christian steward. If you are rich, you should give large sums of money to support the work of your Church; if you are poor, you will give all you can, even though it be

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but little. If you have nothing, the Church will not expect you to give. But you must give "according to your ability." It is not honorable to permit other members of the Church to pay all the bills, if you are able to help. Do your share; and your share is according to your income.

The rule of giving which Paul advised Church members to follow is found in 1 Cor. 16. 2: "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper." The giving here described is *individual*: something from "each one;" *regular*: "on the first day of the week;" and *proportional*: "as he may prosper."

The only way to give as you may prosper is to set aside for religious work a certain per cent of your income. The Jews were required to give the *tithe*, that is, one tenth of their income, to support their religion. Do you not think that Christians should do at least as much as Jews? Many Christians are giving one tenth and find it the easiest and most joyful way of giving.

This vow requires you to give not only to support your own Church at home, but also to what we call the "Benevolences." These are: (1) Foreign Missions; (2) Home Missions and Church Extension; (3) Education; (4) Education for Negroes; (5) Sunday Schools; (6) Temperance, Prohibition, and Public Morals; (7) Hospitals and Homes; (8) American Bible Society. Each of these benevolent enterprises, except the American Bible Society, which is supported by nearly all the Protestant Churches, is managed by a Board appointed by the Church at its General Conference.

The Board of Foreign Missions looks after our missions in foreign countries. When you give money to this benevolence you are help-

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ing to support missionaries in foreign lands, and to build schools, hospitals, orphanages, and churches, for the uplift of foreign peoples

The Board of Home Missions and Church Extension looks after missionary work in the United States (including Porto Rico and Hawaii). Money given to this benevolence is spent in supporting Christian workers in needy places in rural communities and in large cities, and in helping to build new church buildings where the people are not yet able to build them without help.

The Board of Education looks after the schools and colleges of the Church. By loaning money it helps worthy young people who have not sufficient means of their own to get a college education to fit them for the ministry or missionary work. The Children's Day collection is all put into this student loan fund.

The Board of Education for Negroes supports Christian schools in the South for the colored people.

The Board of Sunday Schools arranges courses of study for our Sunday schools, promotes the training of Sunday school teachers, helps needy schools with free literature, organizes new Sunday schools, and has general charge of all our Methodist Sunday school interests. It employs men who do nothing else but establish new Methodist Sunday schools. Many of these schools grow into churches; so that the Board of Sunday Schools is one of our most important home missionary agencies. Its work, however, is not confined to the United States, but is gradually extending to the foreign mission fields.

The Board of Temperance, Prohibition, and Public Morals has for its object the pro-

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motion of voluntary total abstinence from all intoxicants and narcotics, and securing the enactment of laws prohibiting the traffic in alcoholic liquors.

The Board of Hospitals and Homes is charged with the care of all our hospitals together with homes for children and old people.

The American Bible Society publishes and scatters Bibles in many different languages. It has its agents everywhere, especially in foreign lands, selling and giving away Bibles. The missionaries in all the Protestant Churches depend on this Society for their supply of Bibles. Its work is very important.

Besides these general Church Benevolences the women of our Church support the Woman's Foreign and the Woman's Home Missionary Societies. The Deaconess work, Epworth League and proper support of the retired preachers are among the most worthy claimants upon our generosity.

When you take this vow you promise that, according to your ability, you will give money to these good causes. By doing so you are "promoting the Redeemer's kingdom," as you promise to do in the vow just after this. It is not only a duty to give time and money to these noble "benevolent enterprises," but it is a privilege that should be full of joy to every Church member.

Will you cheerfully be governed by the rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church, hold sacred the ordinances of God, and endeavor, as much as in you lies, to promote the welfare of your brethren and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom?

Answer. I will.

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When you join any society you are expected to keep its rules, or laws. If you do not intend to obey the rules of the Church, you ought not to promise that you will. Maybe you will conclude that some of the rules of the Church are not as wise as they might be; but it is your duty to keep them as long as you are a member of the Church, just as it is our duty to keep the laws of our country, even though we may think some of them are not wise. All the rules of our Church, if followed, are wise and good enough to keep you away from all things that are wrong, or verging on the wrong. (See the "General Rules," on pages 59 to 61.) You should also read "Special Advices" (Chapter II of the Discipline).

If you live up to this vow, you will do all you can also to help the other members of the Church. Be such a member as you think others ought to be. You will have the missionary spirit also; for you will try with all your might to advance the Redeemer's kingdom. It will make you a personal worker in Christ's cause. You will be an active Church member.

The Discipline of 1920 also provides a form for receiving children into full connection. The questions asked are as follows:

Do you receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and do you confess him as your Lord and Master?

Answer. I do.

Do you receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ?

Answer. I do.

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Will you be loyal to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and uphold it by your prayer, your presence, your gifts, and your service?

Answer. I will.

Chapter V

TEN DOCTRINES OF GRACE WHICH METHODISTS BELIEVE AND TEACH

BY BISHOP VINCENT

I. I believe that all men are sinners.

II. I believe that God the Father loves all men and hates all sin.

III. I believe that Jesus Christ died for all men to make possible their salvation from sin, and to make sure the salvation of all who believe in him.

IV. I believe that the Holy Spirit is given to all men to enlighten and to incline them to repent of their sins and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

V. I believe that all who repent of their sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ receive the forgiveness of sin. [This is justification.]

VI. I believe that all who receive the forgiveness of sin are at the same time made new creatures in Christ Jesus. [This is regeneration.]

VII. I believe that all who are made new creatures in Christ Jesus are accepted as the children of God. [This is adoption.]

VIII. I believe that all who are accepted as the children of God may receive the inward assurance of the Holy Spirit to that fact. [This is the witness of the Spirit.]

IX. I believe that all who truly desire and seek it may love God with all their heart and soul, mind and strength, and their neighbors as themselves. [This is entire sanctification.]

X. I believe that all who persevere to the end, and only those, shall be saved in heaven forever. [This is the true final perseverance.]

Chapter VI

OUR CHURCH GOVERNMENT

1. CONFERENCES

The Methodist Episcopal Church is organized into Conferences.

(1) The Quarterly Conference is the governing body of each local Church or circuit. It meets four times a year, as its name shows. It consists of the trustees, who look after the property of the Church; the stewards, who collect the money for the pastor's salary and other expenses of the Church, and supervise the Church membership; class leaders, Sunday school superintendent, Epworth League president, superintendent of the Junior League, president of the Ladies' Aid, president of the Woman's Home Missionary Society, and of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, pastor, and other ministers connected with the local Church, deaconesses employed within the charge, local preachers, and exhorters. The members of the Quarterly Conference generally organize themselves into an *official board* to transact business between the meetings of the Quarterly Conference. (For additional members see Discipline, 1920, ¶ 104.)

(2) The District Conference, when it is organized, consists of the ministers in a superintendent's district.

(3) An Annual Conference is composed of the ministers within a certain territory. The preachers report their work to the Annual Conference and receive their appointments for the next year by the bishop on the last day of the Conference session. The Annual Conference also examines the character of each minister. If a minister is accused of unchristian conduct, the Conference acts as

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a court to try his case. It may expel him, if found guilty. The Annual Conference admits men to the ministry and has complete control of the ministry of the Church. It has many important duties.

(4) The supreme body in our Church is the General Conference, which meets once every four years in the month of May. It is composed half of laymen and half of ministers. The lay delegates are elected in the following way: Once every four years each charge in the Annual Conference elects, by vote of the Church members, one person to attend the "Lay Electoral Conference." This meets at the seat of the Annual Conference and elects the lay delegates to the General Conference. The ministers of the Annual Conference elect their own representatives. The General Conference makes all the laws for the Church, and elects bishops, publishing agents, editors of Church papers, and the secretaries for the Benevolent Societies.

2. THE MINISTRY

The *class or unit leader* is a subpastor, whose business is to meet once a week a certain group of the members of the Church and to look after their spiritual welfare. The class or unit leader is a layman and is appointed by the pastor.

A *local preacher* is a layman (man or woman) connected with a local Church, who has been licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conference. Such a preacher may be appointed by the district superintendent to preach in churches where there is no regular pastor, and may do other preaching as the pastor may direct. Sometimes local preachers are ordained by the Annual Conference in order that they may baptize and assist in the communion service.

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The *pastor*, or preacher in charge, is the most important officer in the ranks of our ministry. He receives his appointment for one year at a time from the bishop who presides over the Annual Conference. His duty is to preach and to look after the life and work of the Church over which he has been placed.

The *district superintendent* oversees the Churches and pastors within a certain district, which is a smaller division of an Annual Conference. He is a subbishop, and receives his appointment every year from the bishop. One very important duty of the district superintendent is to act as adviser to the bishop in appointing preachers to their charges. The superintendents form the "bishop's Cabinet" at the Annual Conference. Pastors and district superintendents may be appointed to the same Church or district for an unlimited number of years.

The *bishops* (or general superintendents) are the chief officers of our Church. While they are general superintendents, the General Conference determines where each effective bishop shall live and gives him special charge of a particular area. Among many other important duties perhaps the most important is the appointment of district superintendents and pastors to their fields of labor.

Our Church is called Methodist *Episcopal* because it has bishops. Any Church which has bishops is an *episcopal* Church. The Greek word for *bishop* is *episcopos*. Our form of Church government is, therefore, *episcopal*—not *presbyterian*, nor *congregational*.

Chapter VII

THE ORIGIN OF OUR CHURCH

John Wesley, the man out of whose life and work grew Methodism, was born June 17, 1703, at Epworth, England. His father, Samuel Wesley, was the rector of Epworth parish. His mother, Susannah Wesley, was a remarkable woman of strong and cultured mind. Samuel and Susannah Wesley were the parents of nineteen children, John being the fifteenth, and Charles, the greatest hymn writer of modern times, the eighteenth child. Ten of these children lived to be full grown, and were a very talented family.

They received their early education from the mother. When a child became five years old it was put into the household school with the mother as teacher. Mrs. Wesley's family school began at nine in the morning and closed at five in the evening, with two hours intermission for dinner. Each child was expected to learn its letters the first day in school. All of them accomplished the task in one day except two, whom Mrs. Wesley said she "thought very dull."

Her discipline was very strict, but very wise. At one year old each child was taught to cry softly, and no child was ever given anything for which it cried. The children were not allowed to eat between meals. A child who did wrong was never punished if it confessed.

The religious training of the children was carefully attended to. They had religious services every day in the home. Besides the family worship, Mrs. Wesley took each child

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for one hour alone once a week for religious conversation and prayer.

The family was very poor, but thrifty; and through the influence of their godly and cultured parents all of these children grew up to be well-educated and religious men and women, and every one of them died an earnest Christian.

When John was six years old something happened which had great influence on his life. Samuel Wesley was a fearless preacher against the sins of his rude parishioners. Twice rowdies set fire to his house in revenge for his plain preaching. The second attempt was made at night, when all the family were asleep. In the hurry of escape, John was forgotten, and when the rest were all out of the house it was remembered that he was upstairs asleep. The father ran to the stairway, only to find it burned out. He fell on his knees and commended his child to God. Meanwhile John had awaked, and finding escape by the stairs impossible, he ran to the window and cried for help. There was no ladder; so one man climbed upon the shoulders of another and reached the child, who was rescued just as the burning thatch-roof fell in. Ever afterward Wesley spoke of himself as "a brand plucked from the burning." After this providential escape Mrs. Wesley gave John special attention. She wrote in her diary: "I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child. Lord, give me grace, and bless my efforts with success." The wonderful history of Methodism is the answer to that prayer.

At the age of seventeen John Wesley entered Oxford University, where he gained high reputation for scholarship; so that upon his graduation he was elected to the teaching and governing faculty as lecturer in Greek.

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For a short time he went back to Epworth to help his father in his work as a pastor. After some months he was called back to Oxford, where he stayed six years. During John's stay at Epworth, Charles Wesley, who was then a student at Oxford, and a few other young men formed a club for helping each other in the religious life. When John came back he entered zealously into the purposes of this club and was soon recognized as its leader. The moral and religious life of the students was very low at that time. Consequently, they ridiculed these few young men who showed zealous interest in the religious life by calling them "Bible Bigots," "The Holy Club," and "Methodists." The name "Methodist" was given because of the regular and methodical religious habits of the members of the club. They had regular hours for study of the Greek New Testament and theology, and for visiting the sick, helping the poor, and preaching to prisoners. They fasted and prayed and frequently took the communion. The name "Methodist" was given in ridicule, but has become a name of which we are all proud.

In 1736 John and Charles Wesley came to Georgia with General Oglethorpe, Charles being his private secretary. On the way over the Wesleys met a band of Moravians who were so devout, and so fearless in a great storm that threatened the ship, that John was impressed with the fact that they had a religious experience which he did not have. After two years of unsuccessful missionary work in America—unsuccessful because they were very severe, formal, and ritualistic in their doctrines and practices—the Wesleys returned to England.

Upon arriving in London, being dissatisfied with his religious experience, John sought

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the Moravians. Peter Böhler, one of their leaders, convinced Wesley of the truth that salvation came by simple faith; that conversion was instantaneous, and that one might have in his own heart the assurance that God had forgiven his sins and adopted him as a child of God. Since this has been the gist of Methodist teaching, we must quote Wesley's own words as to how he got the experience: "In the evening [May 24, 1738] I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved me from the law of sin and death." Up to this moment Wesley's religion had been one of form and deeds; now it was a religion of experience.

Three days before this Charles Wesley had obtained the same happy experience. Out of the warmed hearts of these good men came the great movement called Methodism, that has warmed the hearts of millions.

After a few months' visit to the Moravian colony at Herrnhut, Germany, where he learned many things that afterward became a part of Methodism, he returned to England and began preaching in the Anglican Churches. During his absence his brother Charles had been preaching to large crowds and had won several of the clergy over to the new views. When John began preaching his new experience, crowds flocked to hear him. It was such an unusual sight to see crowds seeking the churches that the regular

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clergy, fearing this new enthusiasm, began to close their churches against the Wesleys. Meanwhile George Whitefield, the eloquent evangelist of the Methodist revival (who had been a member of the Oxford "Holy Club"), returned from America and began preaching out-of-doors. Wesley hesitated to do this at first, but finally adopted the plan. Often after this he spoke to ten, twenty, and even thirty thousand people at once. In 1742 he visited Epworth, expecting to preach in his father's old church; but the new rector refused to admit a Methodist to his pulpit. So Wesley announced a meeting in the churchyard. Hundreds came to hear him preach daily for a week, as he stood on his father's tombstone. Many were converted, some of them dropping down as dead under his preaching.

The first Methodist society was organized at Bristol in 1739. In the following years hundreds of these "societies" were organized. It was not Wesley's intention to start a new denomination. These were intended as little circles within the Church of England; and the Wesleys to the day of their death were regularly ordained ministers in the national Church.

The first Methodist meetinghouse was begun in Bristol; but the first building actually opened for Methodist services was an old foundry in a suburb of London called Moorfields; hence it was called the Foundry Church. It became the headquarters for early Methodism.

Up and down England and Ireland went these flaming evangelists, preaching the good news of a present, conscious salvation—the doctrine that religion was not mere form and creed, but an experience. For about fifty years John Wesley preached almost

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daily, sometimes as many as five times a day. Often, in the early part of the revival, Methodist meetings were broken up by rowdies, sometimes led by the parish clergyman. The preachers were egged, clubbed, and stoned. Wesley was several times dragged through the streets, and his life was often in danger. These heroic preachers, however, were undaunted. They visited communities where the Established Church was doing nothing to save the people. They held meetings, for instance, among the wicked, half-barbarous coal miners of Cornwall. Some of these men had scarcely ever heard of the gospel, and as they stood, with their faces black with coal dust, listening to the good news of salvation through Christ, their tears made little white streaks as they trickled down their faces. The common people heard these preachers gladly, although the Church authorities, as a rule, opposed them bitterly.

As the Methodist societies increased in number Mr. Wesley inaugurated several things that have become a part of world-wide Methodism.

Watch Night was first observed among the converted miners of Kingswood. Before the Methodist preachers visited them the miners had been in the habit of spending the last night of the year in drunken carousals. After their conversion they held a Watch Night of prayer and praise instead of the customary drunken debauch.

The Love Feast was also revived by Wesley. It was a custom of the early Church which had long been abandoned, but had been revived by the Moravians, from whom Wesley adopted it.

The Class Meeting grew out of the church building enterprise at Bristol. The trustees

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had contracted a large debt. As a financial plan the Bristol society was divided into classes of twelve persons each, over which a leader was appointed to collect a penny a week to help pay the debt. During the visits the leaders discovered that some of the members were not living as they ought. Wesley then instructed the leaders to inquire into the spiritual condition of each member. This was the origin of the Class Meeting.

As the work grew, and more helpers were in demand, "local preachers," that is, preachers who were unordained laymen, were pressed into service. Susannah Wesley must be given the credit of this feature of Methodism. During an absence from the Foundry Wesley appointed Thomas Maxfield to watch over the congregation. There was so much interest in the meetings that he began preaching to the members. Hearing of this, Wesley hastened back to London to put a stop to this irregularity of a layman preaching. His mother urged him to go slowly; to hear Maxfield before stopping him; that Maxfield was as much called of God to preach as he himself. After hearing a sermon by Maxfield, Wesley agreed with his mother, and soon had a force of lay preachers working all over the country. Without their aid Methodism would have been badly crippled.

In June, 1744, Wesley called together his helpers for a conference on "the best method of carrying on the work of God." This first conference consisted of John and Charles Wesley, four ministers of the Church of England, and four local preachers. This was the first of those "Annual Conferences" which are still a feature of Methodism in all the world.

The only division that has ever occurred in Methodism on the question of doctrine

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took place in 1741. George Whitefield, while in America, had adopted the doctrine known as "Calvinism," that some are predestined, or elected, by God himself to be saved, and others to be lost. When he began preaching that fearful doctrine in England, Wesley opposed it. In theology Wesley was an "Arminian," and believed that whosoever should believe should be saved; that God had not planned that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth; that Christ had died for all men, and only those should be lost who willfully rejected him. This is known as the doctrine of "free grace." Wesley and Whitefield could not agree; so Whitefield's adherents joined themselves together as the "Calvinistic Methodists." They were a small part of the Methodists then, and are a very small part now, existing mostly among the Welsh.

It has already been said that these Methodist societies were not a new Church, or denomination: they were societies within the Church of England. Wesley would not permit his followers to celebrate the Lord's Supper in their meetinghouses, but urged them to take sacrament in the regular churches. He had no desire to form a new Church. In the last years of his life, however, he saw that the separation from the mother Church must come. So he provided for the separate organization of the Methodist Church as soon as he should die. He knew that if he did not, the Methodists would be scattered and the work he had begun would cease. After his death, according to the plan he had drawn up the Wesleyan Methodist Church was organized; and this is to-day the largest Methodist body in England.

John Wesley was one of the wisest and best men of the world. He was a very

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versatile man, learned in many things. He was versed in literature, ancient and modern; in medicine and science, theology, and several modern languages. He was an extensive writer and publisher, and introduced good reading at low prices among his people as no other man of his time did. He was a good business man, although he gave away for religion and charity nearly all the large income from his publications. He had all the elements of a great statesman. His genius for organization is shown in the thorough organization of Methodism to-day. His work saved the English nation from irreligion and revolution, and started many of the moral reforms of modern times. He died in 1791 at the age of eighty-eight years, leaving behind a Methodist membership of more than one hundred and forty thousand in Europe and America.

1. AMERICAN METHODISM

Twenty-five years before John Wesley's death Methodism began in America. Of course the Wesleys had been in America before, but they were not then *Methodists* in the true sense. Whitefield had traveled all over the colonies and had had great revivals, but he had formed no societies. In 1760 some Methodist immigrants from Ireland came to New York City, among them Philip Embury, a carpenter, who had in Ireland been a class leader, and Barbara Heck, a devoted woman. For six years several of this little band of Methodists seem to have neglected their religious life. One day Barbara Heck, having gone to make a call at the house of her brother, found there a party playing cards. Righteously indignant, she seized the deck, threw the cards into the fire,

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warned the players of their worldliness, and left. Going directly to the house of Embury, she urged him to preach the gospel. He excused himself by saying he had no place to hold meetings. She told him to use his own house. Then she went out and gathered four others. This company of five, with Philip Embury as preacher, was the first Methodist congregation in America. They were organized into a class. Others were converted, and then another class was formed, one for men and one for women. Embury's house being too small for the growing congregation, they rented a "rigging loft," where regular services were held until a church was built on John Street. An old Methodist church still stands on this spot in New York, and daily services are held there. The author of this little book once attended in this church the most old-fashioned Methodist meeting he ever attended.

About the same time Robert Strawbridge, who had been a Methodist local preacher in Ireland, began preaching near Baltimore, Maryland, holding services in his own house. A Methodist society was organized and a rude log church with neither floor, door, nor window was soon built on Sam's Creek. From these two centers, New York and Baltimore, Methodism has radiated all over America.

From these humble beginnings Methodism grew rapidly. In response to an appeal from the New York society Wesley sent two ordained preachers from England, Boardman and Pilmoor. Pilmoor preached in Philadelphia and Boardman in New York, and after five months changed places. This was the beginning of the Methodist itinerancy in America. In response to another appeal for

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preachers, Wesley sent, in 1771, Richard Wright and Francis Asbury. Asbury was destined to become the most prominent man in early American Methodism. The work grew rapidly, and Wesley sent Thomas Rankin and George Shadford, the former having been appointed superintendent of all the work in America. He called the first Methodist Conference in America to meet in Philadelphia in 1773. Reports showed there were ten preachers and one thousand one hundred and sixty members in America. The membership nearly doubled the next year.

The Revolutionary War checked the growth of Methodism for awhile. When the war broke out, all the English preachers returned to England, except Asbury, who stayed by the flock at great risk to his life; for Asbury and the Methodists for some reason were suspected of disloyalty to the American cause. The work went on, however, and as soon as the war was over, it grew rapidly under the able leadership of Asbury, so that in 1784 there were eighty-four traveling preachers and fifteen thousand members.

Up to the year 1784 the Methodist societies in America had been under the absolute control of John Wesley. An agitation had been going on for several years among American Methodists to have a separate organization. They gave several reasons for the demand:

1. The Colonies were now independent.
2. Wesley had not permitted the Methodist preachers to baptize or administer the Lord's Supper because they were not ordained. They saw no reason why they should be compelled to go to other Churches for these sacraments.

3. Wesley was eighty-one years old, likely

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to die at any time, and leave his American brethren unorganized.

After long urging Wesley consented to the organization, and having ordained Dr. Thomas Coke, an elder in the Church of England, as superintendent of American Methodism, sent him, together with Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, to organize the new Church.

They arrived in New York, where Coke preached. The party pushed on to Philadelphia. From here they proceeded to Barrett's Chapel, a church in a forest in Delaware, where a great quarterly meeting was held. Here Coke met Asbury. After the service Coke called the preachers together. They agreed to call a General Conference of all the Methodist preachers in America to meet on Christmas eve at Baltimore. This is therefore called the "Christmas Conference."

At this first General Conference sixty preachers were present. A long letter from Wesley was read setting forth his reasons for organizing the Church and indicating the kind of a Church organization he wished. Wesley had appointed Coke and Asbury as general superintendents—or bishops, as they were afterwards called—but Asbury refused to receive the office unless his brethren of the Conference should elect him. This was the beginning of the custom of electing bishops in our Church. Whatcoat wrote, "We agreed to form a Methodist Episcopal Church, in which the liturgy as presented by the Rev. John Wesley should be read, and the sacraments administered by a superintendent, elders, and deacons."

Thus the Methodist Episcopal Church was launched on its glorious career. Heroic "circuit riders" with their saddlebags visited

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the towns and cities, urged their weary steeds over mountains, and penetrated to the scattered settlements in the forests and plains west of the Alleghenies, planting their societies in North, South, East, and West, until to-day the Methodists, with about seven million members, outnumber every other Protestant body in America. May we be true to the spirit of our founder, and with the heroism and zeal of the early Methodists push the Lord's battle until the day when every stronghold of Satan shall be captured by the King of kings and Lord of lords.

ARTICLES OF RELIGION

I. Of Faith in the Holy Trinity

¶ 1. There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

II. Of the Word, or Son of God, who was made very Man

¶ 2. The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided; whereof is one Christ, very God and very Man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men.

III. Of the Resurrection of Christ

¶ 3. Christ did truly rise again from the dead and took again his body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.

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IV. Of the Holy Ghost

¶ 4. The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

V. The Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation

¶ 5. The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scriptures we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament of whose authority there was never any doubt in the Church. The names of the canonical books are:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, The First Book of Samuel, The Second Book of Samuel, The First Book of Kings, The Second Book of Kings, The First Book of Chronicles, The Second Book of Chronicles, The Book of Ezra, The Book of Nehemiah, The Book of Esther, The Book of Job, The Psalms, The Proverbs, Ecclesiastes or the Preacher, Cantica or Song of Solomon, Four Prophets the greater, Twelve Prophets the less.

All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical.

VI. Of the Old Testament

¶ 6. The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between

God and man, being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard who feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the law given from God by Moses as touching ceremonies and rites doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth; yet, notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral.

VII. Of Original or Birth Sin

¶ 7. Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.

VIII. Of Free Will

¶ 8. The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he can not turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

IX. Of the Justification of Man

¶ 9. We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most

wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

X. Of Good Works

¶ 10. Although good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgments; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, inso-much that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

XI. Of Works of Supererogation

¶ 11. Voluntary works—besides, over, and above God's commandments—which are called works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required: whereas Christ saith plainly, When ye have done all that is commanded of you, say, We are unprofitable servants.

XII. Of Sin After Justification

¶ 12. Not every sin willingly committed after justification is the sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore, the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification: after we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and, by the grace of God, rise again and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned who say they can no more sin as long as they live here; or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

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XIII. *Of the Church*

¶ 13. The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

XIV. *Of Purgatory*

¶ 14. The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardon, worshiping, and adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but repugnant to the word of God.

XV. *Of Speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the People understand*

¶ 15. It is a thing plainly repugnant to the word of God, and the custom of the primitive Church, to have public prayer in the Church, or to administer the Sacraments, in a tongue not understood by the people.

XVI. *Of the Sacraments*

¶ 16. Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm, our faith in him.

There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the gospel; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction, are not

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to be counted for Sacraments of the gospel; being such as have partly grown out of the *corrupt* following of the apostles, and partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures, but yet have not the like nature of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.

The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about; but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves condemnation, as St. Paul saith, 1 Cor. 11. 29.

XVII. *Of Baptism*

¶ 17. Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the Church.

XVIII. *Of the Lord's Supper*

¶ 18. The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a Sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; insomuch that, to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of our Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ,

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but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshiped.

XIX. *Of both Kinds*

¶ 19. The Cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the Lay People; for both the parts of the Lord's Supper, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be administered to all Christians alike.

XX. *Of the one Oblation of Christ, finished upon the Cross*

¶ 20. The offering of Christ, once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in the which it is commonly said that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit.

XXI. *Of the Marriage of Ministers*

¶ 21. The Ministers of Christ are not commanded by God's law either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage: therefore, it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their

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own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve best to godliness.

XXII. *Of the Rites and Ceremonies of Churches*

¶ 22. It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike; for they have been always different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the Church to which he belongs, which are not repugnant to the word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly (that others may fear to do the like), as one that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and woundeth the consciences of weak brethren.

Every particular Church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification.

XXIII. *Of the Rulers of the United States of America*

¶ 23. The President, the Congress, the General Assemblies, the Governors, and the Councils of States, *as the Delegates of the People*, are the Rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the Constitution of the United States, and by the Constitutions of their respective States. And the said States are a sovereign and independent Nation, and ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction.

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XXIV. *Of Christian Men's Goods*

¶ 24. The riches and goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

XXV. *Of a Christian Man's Oath*

¶ 25. As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ and James his apostle; so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the Prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth.

GENERAL RULES

(These rules were written by John Wesley, and have ever since been required for admission into Methodist churches.)

There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these Societies—"a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." But wherever this is really fixed in the soul it will be shown by its fruits.

It is therefore expected of all who continue therein that they shall continue to evidence their desire of salvation—

First—By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced; such as

The taking of the name of God in vain.

The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein or by buying or selling.

Drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity.

Slaveholding; buying or selling slaves.

Fighting, quarreling, brawling, brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling.

The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty.

The giving or taking things on usury—that is, unlawful interest.

Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation; particularly speaking evil of Magistrates or of Ministers.

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.

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Doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as:

The putting on of gold and costly apparel.

The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God.

Softness and needless self-indulgence.

Laying up treasure upon earth.

Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

¶ 31. It is expected of all who continue in these Societies that they shall continue to evidence their desire of salvation—

Second—By doing good; by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men:

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison:

To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine, that "we are not to do good unless *our hearts be free to it.*"

By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others; buying one of another; helping each other in business; and so much the more because the world will love its own and them *only*.

By all possible diligence and frugality, that the gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race which is set before them, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to

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bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them *falsely*, for the Lord's sake.

¶ 32. It is expected of all who desire to continue in these Societies that they shall continue to evidence their desire of salvation—

Third—By attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are:

The Public Worship of God;

The Ministry of the Word, either read or expounded;

The Supper of the Lord;

Family and private Prayer;

Searching the Scriptures;

Fasting or Abstinence.

¶ 33. These are the General Rules of our Societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If there be any among us who observes them not, who habitually breaks any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a season. But if then he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

(In learning these commandments the parts in italics may be omitted.)

I

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

II

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: *for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.*

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V

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI

Thou shalt not kill.

VII

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII

Thou shalt not steal.

IX

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

X

Thou shalt not covet *thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.*

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What is the name of our Church?
2. Of what greater Church is it a part?
3. Why is the Church a sacred institution?
4. Give two beautiful names for the Church.
5. Why are these names given?
6. Quote a verse showing the importance of keeping vows.
7. How many kinds of members has our Church? Name them.
8. Do other Churches have probation?
9. Why do we have it?
10. What is the difference between the two kinds of members?
11. What is the first question asked of those who wish to join on probation?
12. What is sin?
13. Why is sin a dreadful thing? Answer by Scripture.
14. What does the word *Jesus* mean?
15. How are we saved from sin?
16. What is the second vow a probationer takes?
17. What is a holy life?
18. Quote from memory 1 Pet. 5. 8.
19. What is the third vow of a probationer?
20. Name the appointed means of grace.
21. What is prayer?
22. Name three kinds.
23. Quote a promise of God to hear prayer.
24. Why should a Christian study the Bible? Answer by a verse from Timothy.

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25. Why should one attend church?
26. Quote a Bible verse exhorting us to attend public worship.
27. How many sacraments are there? Name them.
28. What is the meaning of baptism?
29. What modes are used?
30. Which mode do Methodists use?
31. Is the mode essential? Why?
32. Recite the Baptismal Covenant.
33. What is said about the Apostles' Creed.
34. What is meant by the "holy catholic Church"?
35. What is true Christian baptism? Quote Mark 1. 8. Give an incident from Acts showing what Christian baptism includes.
36. Is it proper to partake of the communion before baptism? Why?
37. Give two other names for the Lord's Supper.
38. What three things does this sacrament symbolize?
39. Show how it symbolizes both life and death.
40. Tell what the "Blood Covenant" is, and what relation it has to the Lord's Supper.
41. What is the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Lord's Supper?
42. Describe the first Lord's Supper.
43. How many sets of vows do Methodists take in coming into the Church?
44. What are they?
45. What is the first vow taken for membership in full connection?
46. Why is this vow required?
47. What is the second vow for full membership?

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48. What is faith in Christ?
49. What is meant by the "new birth"?
50. Name what you consider the ten most important doctrines taught in the Twenty-five Articles of Religion.
51. What is the vow a Methodist takes in regard to giving?
52. Explain what it means.
53. What is Paul's rule of giving? Quote exactly.
54. Name three things this rule teaches.
55. Do you think Christians should be tithers?
56. What are the "Benevolent Enterprises" of our Church?
57. What is the work of each?
58. What benevolent societies do our women support?
59. Give Wesley's rule for the use of money.
60. What is the final vow a Methodist takes in coming into the Church?
61. Name some things that are forbidden, and some things that are enjoined by the Rules of our Church.
62. What is the doctrine of "Universal Redemption"?
63. Is the Holy Spirit given to all men? To all men equally?
64. State our doctrine of Justification.
65. State our doctrine of Regeneration.
66. State our doctrine of Adoption.
67. State our doctrine of Witness of the Spirit.
68. State our doctrine of Sanctification.
69. State our doctrine of Final Perseverance.
70. Name four kinds of Conferences in our Church.
71. What is the Quarterly Conference, and who compose it?

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72. Who compose an Annual Conference, and what are some of its duties?
73. How often does the General Conference meet?
74. Of whom composed and how are members elected?
75. Name two important duties of the General Conference.
76. What is a class or unit leader?
77. What is a local preacher?
78. How is the pastor appointed, and for how long?
79. How is a district superintendent appointed, and what are some of his duties?
80. Who are the supreme officers in our Church, and what are some of their duties?
81. What is the difference between an *itinerant* and a *diocesan* bishop?
82. Why is our Church called an *episcopal* Church?
83. Name two other forms of Church government, and two Churches of each of the three kinds.
84. Who founded Methodism?
85. Tell what you know about his childhood and early training.
86. Tell all you know about John Wesley's college life.
87. What is the origin of the name *Methodist*?
88. Tell about the Wesleys as foreign missionaries.
89. What do you know about the Moravians?
90. Tell about John Wesley's so-called "conversion."
91. Was it conversion or assurance he experienced?
92. For what is Charles Wesley famous?

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93. In a few sentences describe the Methodist Revival in England, giving some incidents of the Revival.
94. Name five characteristic features of Methodism, and tell how they started.
95. When and why did the first division in Methodism occur?
96. When and why did the greatest division in American Methodism occur?
97. Tell why and how the Wesleyan Methodist Church was organized.
98. What can you say about John Wesley as a man?
99. Tell when, where, and how Methodism started in America.
100. Tell all you can about the organization and growth of the Methodist Episcopal Church.
101. Recite the Ten Commandments.

